

Inside ICE

ICE, AUSTRIANS THWART ILLEGAL IRAN ARMS PLOT

U.S. and Austrian authorities have thwarted a plot to illegally supply the Iranian military with thousands of advanced military night vision systems from the United States.

A two-year, joint investigation by ICE, the Defense Criminal Investigative Service (DCIS) and the Austrian Federal Agency for State Protection and Counter Terrorism (BVT) resulted in Austrian authorities arresting two Iranian nationals, Mahmoud Seif and Shahrzad Mir Gholikhan for attempting to violate Austrian export laws.

Seif and Mir Gholikhan were arrested in Vienna, Austria, after a meeting in which they took possession of a U.S. helmet-mounted Generation III military night vision system that they intended to illegally export to Iran.

These transactions were to be the first of a total of 3,000 Generation III military night vision systems that the defendants intended to purchase from the United States for illegal export to Iran. During conversations with U.S. and Austrian law enforcement officials over the course of the investigation, the defendants indicated that the night vision systems were intended for Iranian military infantry.

Generation III military night vision systems are among the most advanced in the world and are capable of amplifying virtually any light source, including faint starlight. Used by U.S. forces around the globe, these systems provide a significant advantage to U.S. troops over opponents in night-time combat. Because of their



Austrian law enforcement authorities, working in cooperation with ICE and other U.S. agencies, arrested two men for attempting to illegally export thousands of sophisticated, third generation night vision technology systems, similar to that shown above, to Iran.

sophistication, export of these systems from the United States is strictly prohibited without a valid export license. In addition, all U.S. exports to Iran are prohibited under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act.

“Keeping sensitive U.S. weapons technology out of the hands of state sponsors of terror is a priority for ICE and the Department of Homeland Security,” said Assistant Secretary Michael Garcia. “Sophisticated night vision systems allow U.S. troops to ‘own the night,’ giving them a key advantage over their opponents during night-time combat. In the wrong hands, these night vision systems pose a threat to our troops around the world. I would like to thank the Austrian BVT for its outstanding efforts in this investigation.”

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

ICE Makes 10th Child Sex Tourist Arrest	2
ICE Employees Receive Honors At First DHS Secretary's Awards	3
ICE Arrests 53 At Critical Facilities In Louisiana, Kansas	3
ICE Breaks Worldwide Drug, Money Laundering Ring In New York	4
ICE Returns Recovered 4th Century Antiquity To Yemen Ambassador	4
ICE Finds Weapons Cache During Fugitive Arrest In Small Texas Town	5
ICE Seizes Smuggled Flu Vaccine At JFK	6

ICE MAKES 10TH CHILD SEX TOURIST ARREST

WASHINGTON, D.C. — The November 19 indictment of a San Diego man on charges that he traveled to the Philippines to engage in sex with boys marked the tenth child sex tourism arrest made by ICE since the passage of the PROTECT Act in 2003. Only two such cases had been made in the 10 years prior to the passage of the act.

A federal grand jury indicted Edilberto Datan, 60, November 19 for travel with intent to engage in a sexual act with a juvenile, use of an interstate facility to entice a minor to engage in a criminal sexual act, and production and possession of child pornography.

U.S. Customs and Border Protection officers in Los Angeles first intercepted Datan November 4 as he returned from a trip to the Philippines carrying computer memory sticks that contained about 100 sexually explicit images of underage Filipino boys. When ICE agents questioned him, Datan said the boys were members of a dance troupe who came to his hotel room to visit and shower. He denied having any inappropriate contact with them.

The PROTECT Act, signed into law by President Bush on April 30, 2003, removed legal barriers that had limited prosecution of those who travel to foreign countries to engage in the sexual abuse and exploitation of children. The law also enhanced the criminal penalties for child sex tourism and gave federal

law enforcement new authorities to investigate these crimes.

“The arrest of Datan, and the nine other people arrested for child sex tourism in the last 18 months, is a clear message that ICE is finding and arresting child sex predators who travel abroad to commit crimes against children,” said Assistant Secretary Michael Garcia. “ICE will use all of its resources and authorities to arrest those who believe that committing crimes against children in another country will shield them from the reach of U.S. law enforcement.”

Datan’s indictment came on the same day as a conviction in another child sex tourism case involving the Philippines. In that case, John W. Seljan, 86, was convicted in federal court in Santa Ana, Calif., of attempted travel with intent to engage in a sexual act with a juvenile, use of an interstate facility to entice a minor to engage in a criminal sexual act and two counts each of production and possession of child pornography. ICE agents had arrested Seljan in October 2003 as he prepared to board a flight in Los Angeles to engage in sex with two Philippine girls, ages 9 and 12. Seljan is scheduled to be sentenced March 7, 2005. He faces a maximum sentence of 270 years in prison.

Facilitated by ICE’s 52 attachés stationed around the world, these 10 PROTECT Act cases are part of Operation Predator, ICE’s enforcement initiative to identify, investigate, arrest and, in the case of for-



Operation Predator

eign nationals, deport child sex predators. Since the initiative began in July 2003, ICE agents have arrested more than 4,400 individuals nationwide. Approximately 85 percent of those arrested were foreign nationals whose crimes make them deportable. More than 2,100 predators have been removed to date. In addition, foreign law enforcement officials, acting on ICE leads, have arrested more than 860 sexual predators in their countries.

Other child sex tourism cases worked by ICE include:

Sebastian Sarraute, 30: On Sept. 24, 2004, ICE agents arrested Sarraute at the Tucson, Ariz. airport as he arrived in the U.S. from France. Agents say Sarraute, a French national, believed he was coming to Tucson to finalize plans to travel to Mexico to have sex with girls who ranged in age from 10 to 14.

Timothy Ronald Obert, 36: On June 23, 2004, ICE agents arrested Obert at his residence in Santa Cruz, Calif. Obert is alleged to have engaged in sexual relations with a minor in Costa Rica while serving there as a Peace Corps volunteer, giving the minor money, drugs and alcohol to facilitate the sex acts.

Inside ICE is an e-newsletter produced by the ICE Office of Public Affairs to inform the public about the mission, operations and activities of U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement. Please send comments and contributions to:

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ICE EMPLOYEES HONORED AT FIRST DHS AWARDS

WASHINGTON, D.C. – Several employees of ICE were recognized for their exemplary service December 2 by Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge.

The “Secretary’s Awards,” which will be presented annually, were inaugurated this year to recognize the service of those who have demonstrated the highest levels of professional performance and commitment to the DHS mission

“ICE is fortunate to have one of the most dedicated and capable work forces in the entire Department and these recognitions reflect that fact,” said Assistant Secretary Michael Garcia. “The ICE employees recognized in this year’s Secretarial Awards ceremony have gone above and beyond the call of duty, and they have met the highest standards for commitment, professionalism, performance and accomplishment. On behalf of all of ICE, I applaud their contributions to the Homeland Security mission.”

Award recipients from ICE included **Victor X. Cerda**, Acting Director, Office of Detention and Removal Operations, Washington, D.C. He received the Silver Medal For Meritorious Service for his outstanding contributions to ICE and DHS while serving in a series of key senior management positions. Since assuming leadership of DRO, Mr. Cerda has addressed difficult budget and operational challenges with strategic vision, enthusiasm and common sense.

Marsha K. Nettles, Chief Counsel, Office of Principal Legal Affairs, Detroit received the Secretary’s Award For Excellence. Ms. Nettles was recognized for her role in litigating the removal case of Rabih Haddad, the chairman and president of the Global Relief Foundation, a designated terrorist organization. As a result of her efforts, Mr.

Haddad was deported from the United States in 2003.

The Secretary’s Award For Excellence was also given to **Thomas L. Trotto and Mark Mullin** of the National Firearms and Tactical Training Unit, and **Soraya Correa**, Office of Procurement

They served on the Weapons and Ammunition Commodities Council and were responsible for consolidating weapons and ammunition purchases throughout the department.

The Secretary’s Award For Valor was given to **Christopher Harvey**, ICE Special Agent, Fort Pierce, Fla. While serving a warrant to arrest a dangerous child pornography violator, the members of Harvey’s raid team came under gunfire, killing

one team member and wounding another. The team members selflessly and heroically disarmed the assailant and brought him to justice.

The Secretary’s Award For Exemplary Service went to **Robert Allmon**, Deportation Assistant, Office of Detention and Removal Operations, Chicago.

Mr. Allmon went above and beyond in his duties as deportation assistant – setting policies, improving processes, providing outstanding service and contributions to the efficiency and integrity of the office. In addition, he volunteered for a 45-day stint with Operation ICE Storm, an operation targeting violent human smuggling networks in Arizona.

ICE ARRESTS 53 ILLEGAL ALIENS AT NUKE TOWER, REFINERY FACILITIES

ICE special agents have arrested more than 50 illegal aliens who used fake documents to get jobs at critical infrastructure facilities in Kansas and Louisiana.

The arrests are part of ICE’s continuing efforts to protect critical infrastructure and assets by ensuring only authorized workers are afforded access to strategic resources and facilities.

In Olathe, Kan., on November 9 ICE agents arrested 44 illegal aliens who were working at Marley Cooling Technologies, where cooling towers for nuclear power plants are made.

In Garyville, La., near New Orleans, nine illegal aliens were arrested by ICE after they sought employment at the Marathon Ashland Petroleum Refinery.

In both cases, the illegal aliens had used fraudulent documents and made false statements to seek or gain employment. The companies involved cooperated fully with ICE.

In the New Orleans case, the nine individuals never were hired because they were identified as possible illegal aliens by the Greater New Orleans Industrial Educational Counsel (GNOIEC), a non-profit organization that provides basic safety training to prospective employees at petroleum refineries and other critical infrastructure facilities.

“Two key missions of ICE are to protect the nation’s critical infrastructure and identify and arrest aliens illegally in the United States,” said Nemo Britton, Resident Agent-in-Charge of ICE Kansas City. “In this case, we were able to accomplish both missions.”

ICE BREAKS DRUG, MONEY LAUNDERING RING

NEW YORK — ICE agents have arrested 22 people in New York, Florida, Arizona and Pennsylvania in connection with a large-scale criminal organization that brought thousands of pounds of marijuana into the New York area and laundered the proceeds through various means, including the use of an American Airlines employee to help fly drug proceeds to other states.

As part of the nine-month investigation "Operation Backyard," ICE agents seized roughly \$2.5 million, 150 pounds of marijuana, seven luxury vehicles, two bulletproof vests, four high-powered rifles, three shotguns and six handguns. Of the 22 people arrested, 12 were in New York, five in Florida, four in Arizona and one was located in Pennsylvania.

According to a federal arrest warrant affidavit unsealed in the Eastern District of New York, the criminal organization allegedly purchased large quantities of marijuana from suppliers in Arizona and transported the drug loads to New York and Florida for distribution.

Once the narcotics were sold, the organization relied upon a New York money transmittal business to help launder the drug proceeds, according to court documents. The organization also used couriers to physically transport large quantities of cash back to Arizona. Court documents allege that the organization relied upon a woman who worked for American Airlines at JFK Airport to help arrange for the transportation of cash via couriers aboard American Airlines flights to Arizona.

ICE agents from Tucson, Tampa, West Palm Beach, and Philadelphia were instrumental in the success of this investigation.

"This case is a perfect example of our commitment to identifying and eliminating significant national drug traffickers whose crimes impact so many vital aspects of our communities and their residents," stated United States Attorney Roslynn R. Mauskopf. "Because it is equally



ICE agents stand over some of the marijuana and weapons seized as a result of "Operation Backyard."

important and critical to our mission, we will continue to 'follow the money' and prosecute money launderers who enable these drug organizations to reap the benefits of their crimes. I want to thank and commend the agents of the United States Immigration and Customs Enforcement who play such a vital role in the ongoing war on drugs."

ICE RETURNS 4th CENTURY ANTIQUITY TO YEMEN

NEW YORK — Assistant Secretary Michael Garcia returned a stolen Fourth Century A.D. cultural



The South Arabian Alabaster Stele was recovered by ICE and returned to the Republic of Yemen.

antiquity to the government of Yemen.

Mr. Garcia gave the antiquity, known as the "South Arabian Alabaster Stele," to His Excellency Abdulla M. Al-Saidi, the Ambassador of the Republic of Yemen. The stele (or plaque) depicts Dat-Hamim, a goddess of fertility, and dates to the period 300-400 A.D. The antiquity was stolen from the Aden Museum in Yemen in July 1994.

ICE agents recovered the stele in New York after a lengthy investigation that began in March 2001. At that time, ICE agents in New York began scrutinizing a well-known an-

tiquities company called Phoenix Ancient Art S.A. and its owners for trafficking in illegally obtained antiquities.

Phoenix later attempted to auction the stele. ICE agents in New York and the ICE Attaché Office in Rome, Italy, were able to obtain proof that the Stele was, in fact, stolen.

In September 2003, ICE agents executed a seizure warrant and took possession of the stele. ICE arrested one of the Phoenix owners for the theft of an Iranian antiquity in December 2003. The owner pled guilty to the charge in June 2004.

ICE ARRESTS HUMAN SMUGGLER SUSPECTED OF SEXUAL ASSAULT

EL PASO, Texas—ICE special agents arrested a 30-year-old Mexico citizen November 30 for allegedly beating and sexually assaulting a woman he is suspected of smuggling into the country.

A man identified by documents in his possession as Pedro Casas-Chavez was arrested at a local motel after the night clerk called police about a disturbance. It is believed that the suspect's name is an alias. It is common for human smugglers to use aliases.

The clerk told police that the woman sought help after escaping from a motel room where she was severely beaten and raped. Police coordinated with ICE because of the smuggling allegations. The woman is currently under the protection of ICE.

The woman, from El Salvador, was one of six illegal aliens Casas-Chavez allegedly smuggled into the country from Mexico. ICE special agents found five other illegal aliens at the motel. The woman said Casas-Chavez separated her from the group and kept her in his room where he allegedly beat and raped her.

ICE DRO DEPORTS GANG MEMBER CONVICTED OF SERIOUS ASSAULT

BLOOMINGTON, Minn. — ICE Detention and Removal Office (DRO) officers on November 18 deported Kevin Javier Ballesillo-Selalla, an illegal alien and known gang member who was convicted in September of aggravated assault for beating a man so badly he suffered traumatic brain injury.



Ballesillo-Selalla

Ballesillo-Selalla, 23, of Honduras, had been using the name and Social Security number belonging to a man who actually lives in Texas. Ballesillo-Selalla had also used the aliases Rodolfo Hernandez and Ricardo Quintero.

Ballesillo-Selalla was convicted Sept. 9 in Kandiyohi County, Minn., of assault. According to court records, Ballesillo-Selalla beat a man about the head so badly that he was hospitalized

for weeks and diagnosed with traumatic brain injury. Ballesillo-Selalla had also been arrested several times and was a known gang member.



Shown above are some of the 19 weapons ICE agents seized when arresting fugitive alien Emiliano Lugo in Texas.

ICE FINDS BIG WEAPONS CACHE DURING TX ALIEN FUGITIVE OPS

HOUSTON, Texas — An ICE Detention and Removal Fugitive Operations (DRO) team found a cache of weapons November 22 while arresting a Mexican national and fugitive at his residence in Conroe, Texas.

Emiliano Lugo, who had been ordered deported from the United States, attempted to flee from his mobile home by climbing out a window. After a consensual search of the property, ICE agents discovered 19 weapons. These weapons included nine long-arm rifles, a Browning .380 caliber handgun, a Colt Model 1911 .45, a TEC-9 9 mm handgun and other semiautomatic weapons.

Inside the mobile home were three small children playing within reach of the location where some of the loaded weapons were seized. The children were three to five years old.

"I am astounded by the callous disregard for the children in this home – they were playing just feet from loaded weapons," said Charles Arendale, DRO Houston Field Office Director. "A fugitive with this amount of illegal firepower is a true threat to our community and to our agents. We're quite pleased to take another dangerous person off this community's streets."

Lugo entered the United States illegally near Brownsville in 1992. He attempted to legalize his immigration status by entering into a fraudulent marriage, but his petition was denied. He had been ordered deported by an Immigration Judge in March 2004 when he failed to appear at his deportation hearing.

The case has been referred to the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms for further investigation.

Inside ICE

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U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is the largest investigative arm of the Department of Homeland Security, responsible for the enforcement of border, immigration, customs, infrastructure and transportation security laws.

Flu Vaccine Seized



ICE special agents from New Jersey intercepted 810 doses of non-FDA approved flu vaccine at JFK Airport in New York November 17. ICE agents are currently investigating the smuggler and the methods used to ship the vaccine to the U.S. in order to identify and shut down vulnerabilities and safeguard the nation's drug supply. The investigation is ongoing.